

**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION  
Office of the State Fire Marshal**

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**FIRE ALARM ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING ACCOUNT  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2004**

Committee Goal: To advise the State Fire Marshal on proposed regulations and technical issues by providing views and comments from members of industry, the public, and the fire service.

**Meeting Attendees:**

Mike Richwine, Chair, Division Chief  
Diane Arend, Vice-Chair, SFM Building Materials Listing Program Coordinator  
Patty McKinnon, Supervising Deputy  
John Guhl, SFM Technical Assistant  
Kim Kirkpatrick, SFM Building Materials Listing Program  
Darcell Hermann, SFM Building Materials Listing Program Assistant  
Brian Heyman, Division of the State Architect  
Mike Novotny, OSHPD  
Rick Cortina, Wheelock, Inc.  
Michael Reeser, Santa Rosa Fire Equipment Service  
Patrick Ward, Schirmer Engineering  
Arnold Cairns, Fire Alarm Consultant  
Shane M. Clary, Bay Alarm Co.  
Howard Hopper, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.  
Jon Kapis, Rolf Jensen and Associates

**Members Absent:**

Bill Hopple, Simplex Grinnell/CAFAA

**Guests:**

Randy Roxson, SFM Assistant Deputy Director  
Rodney Slaughter, SFM Code Development & Analysis Division

**Opening Remarks:**

Division Chief, Mike Richwine called the meeting to order at 9:33 am at the OSFM's Headquarters conference room in Sacramento.

Chief Richwine introduced himself and the committee followed with self-introductions. Previous minutes were approved.

## **Membership-Confirmations, Memberships from FPO's:**

Scott Corrin was released from Advisory Committee membership with a follow up letter from OSFM thanking him for his service. New membership from FPO's, both north and south, is being sought. Preference will be given to individuals familiar with the fire alarm plan review process.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Work Group Updates: Patient Room Corridor Lamps, Fire Alarm Plan Review Guide/Check List**

#### **Patient Room Corridor Lamps:**

Work Group Members:

Mike Novotny discussed the consistency issues with regards to the visual display on the corridor signs. He stated the need for consistency in the code language as to what the indicator should be, unique color, location, or to eliminate that code section. Nursing shortages, nurses changing hospitals frequently and inconsistency with the color of smoke detector nurse lights are issues that add to the confusion. He suggested a more consistent statement be made in the code section to eliminate the inconsistency in the application of the code section. No recommendations for consistency were brought up.

Jon Kapis stated, from a technical standpoint, it is whether the lamp is being directly driven off the fire alarm system or the fire alarm system is interfaced to the nurse call for that point of contact. The first step in uniformity is to assess the candela rating for the devices from the manufacturer's standpoint. He suggested a standard for a red lens indication as a first step.

John Guhl researched the model code language from the UBC that was adopted to discern original intent. He found that it referred to single station smoke detectors 110 volt smoke alarm/smoke detector in the room. He stated the 1988 CBC Smoke Detectors; Section 1010 reads, "Smoke detectors which receive their primary power from the building wiring shall be installed in patient sleeping rooms of hospital and nursing homes". "Actuation of such detectors shall cause a visual display on the corridor side of the room in which the detector is located and shall cause an audible and visual alarm at the respective nurses' station". The code continues with "...if such detectors and related devices are combined with the nurse call system, the total system need not be electrically supervised". An exception was noted for a listening device at the door.

The 1991 code states "Smoke detectors shall be installed in patient sleeping rooms of hospital and nursing homes". The requirement for primary power was dropped from this edition of the code. In the 1995 code there was a change from model

code to state code and for the last two cycles the state has adopted this. There is model code language and the state code language that was not adopted in the 1995 CBC. The state code language was identical to that of the 1991 where it states, "Smoke detectors shall be installed in patient sleeping rooms of hospital and nursing homes", however; the model code language came back to language contained in the 1988 CBC. It states, "...receive their primary power from the building wiring". John Guhl commented that he had no idea why the ICBO dropped the model code at that time. He also said an option of either/or is allowed in the state amendment.

Jon Kapis stated the core issue is what color the lamp should be. It is used to gain the attention of the nurses or the health care facilitators to indicate a condition at a specific location. The notification is more important now as nurses work the floor a lot more. Nurses need to have a clear visual indication that they are receiving a fire signal from a patient room. A red lens indication, either through the nurse call system or through a separate auxiliary device, was suggested.

The committee discussed the reason for the lamp being there. John Guhl stated it was about smoke detectors. Mike Novotny said it came out of the residential requirement. Comment was made that therefore, those detectors that are on building power did not activate the building fire alarm system so how would one know that the smoke detector went off in that patient room.

Jon Kapis stated the confusion issue partly stems from the fact that a hospital can have three wings, separated by doors, and the signals do not go off on the entire floor. It becomes unclear as to where the condition exists. The message annunciator only relays the information on their room. Hospital staff cannot look down a corridor to see corridor annunciation.

Shane Clary commented that the technology pictures add to the confusion for the orderly and the staff. Jon Kapis commented on the increase in the nurse industry and technology groups stating the fire alarm systems and nurse call systems are all over the board.

Mike Novotny stated the intent was to let someone know the non-system smoke detector went off.

John Guhl stated that originally there was the smoke alarm law and that they didn't want to put in a single station smoke alarm that would have a patient alerted by the smoke alarm in the room so there was a silent alarm and a silent smoke detector that did not have an audible alarm. He indicated that is why the code states a visual on the outside of the room. John requested modifications be made to the convalescent hospitals due to night staffing problems.

Mike Richwine proposed to establish a work group to develop proposed language. and would seek input from the nurse call industry regarding their concerns. He stated the OSFM is waiting for an answer from the Governor's Office regarding the

Executive Order issued by Governor Davis limiting the OSFM to annual meetings. If the OSFM is still under the annual meeting criteria, *work groups* can meet as frequently as needed.

Mike Richwine motioned to establish a work group to define what the committee wants to accomplish. He suggested getting someone from the nurse call industry to be a part of the group. Motion approved by Mike Novotny, second by Jon Kapis. The motion was approved to establish a work group.

**Action Item:** The following members are assigned to the workgroup; Jon Kapis, Mike Novotny; John Guhl; Mike Reeser and Bill Hopple. Rodney Slaughter from SFM Code Development will work with the group. Diane Arend will coordinate with members of the group for comments via email or establish need for teleconferences or meetings.

### **FA Plan Review Guide/Check List:**

Jon Kapis stated comments have been reviewed but no further action taken since prior meetings on this issue. Carrying the issue forward is important due to inconsistency with plan review, changes in technology, and issues with the code and intelligibility surfacing. He also stressed the need of incorporating some of those issues into plan review documents. Nor Cal chiefs and RJA have put together proposal packages to resurface this issue.

Shane Clary moved to form a working group on the issue this year. Jon Kapis commented on the inconsistencies with OSHPD and DSA and proposed to establish a work group to address the plan review process.

#### **Action Items:**

Brian Heyman from DSA and Mike Novotny from OSHPD agreed to get volunteers from their departments to join the work group.

Mike Richwine asked the Fire Alarm Committee if a motion is needed, as an existing position already exists. Brian Heyman said that due to state involvement in various businesses, there have been specific procedures developed for reviewing bids for fire alarm designs and fire sprinkler systems that go beyond the technical review of DSA, OSFM, OSHPD, etc. He suggested the development of a state agency standard for design submittal and review of fire alarm systems. The checklist might be the same with regard to reviewing a set of plans for a fire alarm system for a hospital, a prison, or a school, but issues such as performance specifications bidding might need to be addressed from a statewide perspective. He suggested continuing with the group currently in place dealing with local fire officials who review fire alarm plans and set up a separate group at the statewide level to get OSHPD, DSA, RESD, prisons and OSFM on the same page with regards to state authority having jurisdiction review for those facilities.

Patrick Ward from Schirmer Engineering brought up the DSA comment and expressed concern that the approval for fire alarm will no longer be accepted and will be eliminated.

Mike Richwine stated the current work group consists of Mike Reeser, Bill Hopple, Jon Kapis, and Shane Clary. Additional representatives to be added are from DSA, OSHPD and John Guhl from OSFM. Jon Kapis is the Work Group-Chair and will be working with the coordinator, Diane Arend. Mike Richwine stated that anything developed in the working group still needs to come back to the advisory committee for approval prior to going to the State Fire Marshal.

**Action Item:** Brian Heyman will get a representative from DSA in touch with Jon Kapis.

Mike Richwine stated his uncertainty with the possibility of implementing a statewide consistency on notes, as the information needed to be included on plans is specific to a jurisdiction. He would like to see an objective statement come out of the work group that defines exactly what is to be done and what the deliverable is to the FPO's.

**Action Item:** Work group to develop an objective statement.

It was suggested to make the plan checklist universal to the state so that the local AHJ's will consider it. Jon Kapis commented on the importance of OSHPD and DSA involvement. Mike Richwine stated it is a technical review and should be followed up.

Diane Arend commented on the importance of a code reference for backup. Jon Kapis said there might be technically sound information not found in the code reference that should be listed as it could affect a possible fire life situation if not detected.

Shane Clary suggested representatives from Nor Cal and So Cal AHJ's are on the committee. Mike Richwine stated recruitment for representatives for the work group will include individuals from system devices, from North and South and Cal chiefs will be asked to nominate individuals.

**Action Items:** Work Group Members: Chair- Jon Kapis, Mike Reeser, Bill Hopple, Shane Clary, John Guhl, (DSA, and OSHPD representatives pending).

1. Work group to continue addressing comments. Put out an objective statement within 30 days and send out invitations to chief executive appointments from So Cal and Nor Cal with request for feedback.
2. Mike Novotny (OSHPD) and Brian Heyman (DSA) will find representatives within their departments who will contact Jon Kapis.
3. The OSFM will pursue getting representatives from Nor Cal and So Cal FPO's to participate at the Fire Alarm Advisory Committees and who can also help on the work group.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Regulations Update:**

Rodney Slaughter stated the Governor's Executive Order will go back and review regulations for 1999 to present as well as current information on current regulations and the economic impact on business in California. Title 19 and all the regulations, as well as regulations being proposed by the OSFM, have been posted on the Internet. Information regarding economic impact should be sent back to the OSFM. The Fire Alarm Advisory Committee has not been affected by any postings on the Internet.

Recommended code changes regarding the smoke detector nurse call issue must be given to Mike Richwine by July 1<sup>st</sup> to be worked on internally. The changes will then be added to the package to be submitted to the Building Standards Commission in August.

Rodney Slaughter stated that anything worked on together could go just about any time after the executive order is up. He stated that in the justification if any changes are to be made to the code, economic justification must show how it is going to impact California business, on the clients, hospitals, nursing homes, high rises and the facilities installing the fire alarm systems. The governor's office and the department of finance are looking for this kind of economic impact. The department of finance requires forms to be completed that require a lot of information. These forms are important in getting changes through.

Rodney Slaughter stated there isn't a written standard to be utilized for economic impact however any information that would help to justify cost is important to capture. He said the department of finance would be happy to raise the discussion about it.

Pat Ward asked if the committee should be looking at NFPA 5000 language. Rodney Slaughter commented that the plan is to still try and keep on track, and if it goes beyond that then we will correlate it with that adoption.

The OSFM has requested NFPA hire a fire protection engineer to help evaluate the code's and standards fire alarm requirements. The OSFM does not have a fire protection engineer on staff and is looking to hire someone to help correlate the changes. Factors to be considered are additional cost to the business community with fire and life safety having more of a precedent over a higher cost.

Rodney Slaughter and Leslie Haberek require some form of justification from the working group to build on as they put the package together.

Rodney Slaughter commented that Scott Corrin emailed a code change proposal directly to him and in response a letter was sent with a request for a justification on forms to be sent to the OSFM. Rodney Slaughter has not heard back from Scott Corrin.

Rodney stated the correct process for a code change proposal is to put the proposal in writing and postmark or email to the Assistant Deputy Director. The proposal then goes to the Division Chief of Fire Engineering, the Division Chief of Code Development and Analysis, and the remaining division chiefs, and then to the code development staff. Rodney stated that this process was being developed when Scott Corrin sent in his request.

Scott Corrin sent two emails to Rodney Slaughter; one was regarding the NICET issue and the other dealt with fire extinguishers. Rodney stated that the NICET issue deals with the contractor's license board jurisdiction. The email proposed a text language change but lacked the justification and the intent of the proposal was unclear with no statutory authority to process it.

Jon Kapis asked if Scott Corrin's intent was in addition to or equal to the state certification program to recognize NICET certification. Comment was made that NFPA recognizes NICET certification on the design side. Shane Clary stated that in order to be certified you need to get the ruling to change the contractor's license requirement. He stated that eventually the skill set of the person or persons doing the shop work need to be validated as opposed to just working for the architect. Mike Richwine said the issue was NICET and there was not sufficient information to do anything with it. Shane Clary stated that Cafaa is looking at submitting a valid proposal and will follow the format prescribed by state law.

### **Code Interpretation Process/Adoption of 2002 Ed., NFPA 72:**

Randy Roxson stated that a request was presented to the OSFM management team for the governor's signature that special advisors from Cafaa, FPO's, state agencies such as OSHPD and DSA, that whenever a code interpretation goes out, if it is a fire alarm or hospital issue, it would go under a special advisory, and they would be given 20 days instead of the current 10 days to respond back. A quick clarification sheet was also requested. As a special advisor or code interpretation committee member, whenever a code interpretation is rendered by any of these people, comments will be put on a separate document to explain how they got the interpretation. It is difficult to approve something and advise the fire marshal on his approval without knowledge of the steps taken to reach that point. In order to fully understand and implement the changes, comments are needed, be it a simple sentence or perhaps a more complicated way. Roxson said this will be changed in OSFM policy and that policy will again be posted on the website.

Roxson stated the OSFM's intent to archive clarification documents. This would make it possible to update that code with an understanding of prior decisions that were made. The FPO's in So Cal petitioned the OSFM to go back and reconsider its position on interpreting the state amendment regarding the actual language that was written. Stating that even though it is model code by virtue of "it's a document", it still becomes state language made good argument.

Roxson stated that we do not want the model code people going through the process. He said if it is a model code session entirely with no state amendment to it, the person in question shall first speak an opinion or interpretation from the model code surveyor and then that interpretation can be sent to OSFM for review. If we agree then we just follow the interpretation, but once we do that, we now stage the sanction of that interpretation and it becomes a rule that could be argued at the local level. This information will be placed on the OSFM website.

Shane Clary stated that an official interpretation from NFPA goes through balloting of the technical committee in the form of a yes or no question. Roxson asked if that would complicate things with regards to a time line and the response was that as long as you are dealing with staff interpretations that would probably serve your needs and to take action on something that you see in writing. Roxson commented that he would state that in the policy.

Roxson stated there are people that continue to invite on a monthly basis suggested code interpretations and there will come a point where no purpose is being served, therefore the person serious about getting a code interpretation will take the steps to visit the model code office or interpreters to try to get one through. He stated some of the reasons we are doing this, stem from where it came from. He said the OSFM is open for criticism of the process and want it to work for NFPA and the fire people.

Diane Arend asked what the process is for people that do not agree with an interpretation and want to see changes made. Roxson said the person must send a letter to the Assistant Deputy Director or Assistant State Fire Marshal and request a review of any interpretation that the OSFM has made. He said some interpretations are outdated and the code changes make them ineffective. The OSFM needs to know these things. If there is a disagreement on what the outcome was then please notify the OSFM. The advisory committees have a voice on commenting on the interpretations and they should do so.

Roxson stated that we are in the NFPA 5000 process, a model code amendment process that will be adopted in the future. He said we are operating out of the current building code which will get outdated at times so there is a need to have a code cycle occur every year. We intend to utilize that annual code cycle to update that code from time to time.



Roxson stated an update to the 2002 NFPA 72 is being prepared and will be sent to the building standards commission for processing by the August 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline. An executive order took place November 17<sup>th</sup> that says we can develop and make amendments but not process any new regulations for 180 days after the date that Governor Schwarzenegger took office. In that 180-day period we will be doing work on the NFPA 72, 2002 Edition. Changes will be made every year thereafter until the NFPA 5000 is in place. Requests for changes are also taken from various groups and organizations.

Clary stated it is his understanding that Cafaa should be looking at the current 2002. The next step would be to then go through the authority process for cost and other things. He asked if there will be a roll over to the California amendments to the current 1999 Edition of 72 or will we start with a clean slate with the face document requiring justification to each and every amendment made to the 2000.

Roxson stated the building standards commission has discussed the issue regarding justification and said that there is talk about making us do this although we have not had to do this in the past. That entire document is open for comment and if there are amendments or issues that people dislike; the OSFM will review these comments and decide whether or not to make changes. To get a better idea on this, Randy Roxson will check with the SFM legal council.

Mike Richwine stated the OSFM is targeting project specific work groups. Roxson said the OSFM will be doing a more thorough job at cost benefit analysis for any new proposals and would appreciate any input dealing with those differences in order to better identify them.

Roxson said that Governor Schwarzenegger is taking a different approach. Anything that is submitted in his administration will need a detailed cost analysis. Roxson stated that we have gone back to what the governor has asked us to do since the 1999 to try to identify those that did not have a significant cost increase and we are preparing to submit that report. As long as model code is being adopted it pretty much gets you out of any justification needed, but this has yet to be clarified. The executive order does not include the building standards. This issue has not been addressed.

The California model code amendment will require a cost analysis, with committee work, then review and then it will be sent to code development for formatting and legal work. This will all need to be done by August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mike Richwine will get back to the committee with the code development divisions timeline. Although appointments of secretaries and under secretaries of the state control agencies are now in place, there is a communication problem between the departments and the governor's office. Roxson has inquired with the OSFM legal council as to whether an executive order extends beyond the administration change. He said the easiest way is to go to the administration and ask if they want to continue the executive order or to rescind it. He also stated that we are currently

under that executive order until further clarification. He will let Mike Richwine know what the legal council finds out.

Richwine said we are doing the same thing with this budget by forming workgroups. In the meantime regardless of what the outcome is, we are going to need the committee's help on reviewing the NFPA 72 document.

Roxson said he does not think this administration is going to be hard lined on the executive order that was issued under a previous administration.

Clary stated that due to some of the changes made by NFPA between the 1999 and 2002 Editions even though some may be current, amendments in the 1999 Edition if just rolled over might not make sense and might create the need for emergency corrections in the future.

Roxson stated that Fire Engineering is going to go through that document and make the changes that are necessary. They handle fire alarm issues and then working with code development will start making those amendments and will be keeping comments for the advisory committee.

Roxson clarified that "rolling over" pertains to the current amendment and not with NFPA. Diane Arend commented that we make California amendments to NFPA.

Clary stated that we are talking about adopting the 2002 Edition of 72. There are a number of amendments to the text of 1999 Edition and if you just take that text and put it into the 2002 that those California amendments could be in conflict and may no longer make sense.

Roxson agreed and stated that these are the types of things that need to be changed before being submitted. It was assumed that the next step would be for the devices committee to review that document. Just as with adopting a new standard for fire extinguishers, we most always have amendments to it and those amendments are always subject to change depending on what further comment is received. This advisory committee will probably be reviewing that document prior to our submittal.

Clary asked if the OSFM would then need to provide to the building standards commission the justification on a cost basis of going from the 1999 code to the 2002. There are some significant changes to the 2002 Edition that states to add cost.

Roxson stated it is really unclear as we have an executive order that talks about costing tax of business. Whenever we do a regulation we submit a 299 form to the department of finance. Over the years we have not been required do a detailed fiscal analysis. In this process, we have asked the question of what exactly needs to be done for our fiscal analysis or cost benefit analysis. We haven't received any information either from the building standards commission, which is a governing

body to review codes, or from the office of administrative law who also administers. We do not have much direction as to what they are looking for. Each of the different agencies that have departments underneath them is requiring certain things depending on what agency they are under. Our agency will probably do a cost benefit analysis on most of our regulatory changes. This may be a one-page analysis or a couple of sentences. We are going to be studying that closely before submittal so if there is a change that adds significant cost to business, we need to identify this. We have to show that there are going to be some costs.

#### **Replacing System Control Units-Update on Draft Document:**

Mike Richwine stated it is a Bill Hopple issue. Per last meeting minutes, Bill Hopple said that more work needed to be done prior to completing a draft document.

Jon Kapis said the OSFM interpretation is still the case, that the replacement on the control panel due to service issues does not mandate upgrade to current code requirements. It is a service and survivability issue. Kapis affirms that it still needs to be consistent that the replacement of control panels does not mandate an update to current code.

#### **Action Item:**

The item "Replacing System Control Units" may already be addressed in guidance documents and the work group responsible for the fire alarm guidance document is to explore that.

#### **BML Update:**

Diane Arend stated the BML Program is processing renewals for the 2004-2005 year. Renewed listings will be posted on the OSFM website by July 1, 2004 and are valid until June 30, 2005. We encourage local fire authorities to call us anytime for verification of renewals if during their plan review process the submitted listing sheets are expired or if they ever have a question regarding the validity of a listing.

#### **Schedule Next Meeting:**

The date of the next meeting is set for Wednesday, March 2, 2005 at the State Fire Marshal's headquarters conference room in Sacramento.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00pm.

Meeting Minutes Developed by:  
DARCELL HERMANN  
Office of the State Fire Marshal